

Washington, D.C. Congressman Sanford Bishop, a Member of the House Appropriations Committee, is pleased to announce that the full Appropriations Committee has approved language that directs a federal study on the impact of BRAC on Columbus-area schools, and other communities similarly impacted.

The appropriations bill, which passed the full House Appropriations Committee yesterday, includes report language inserted by Congressman Bishop directing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the effects of rebasing and relocation of military personnel. The language instructs the GAO to research “the projected number and percentage increase in student enrollment, and the economic impact which may result from increased student enrollment.”

“This bill will begin to tackle one of the major national issues which resulted from the Department of Defense’s base realignment process. The local economic impact of moving thousands of new students is tremendous, particularly on Columbus and Muscogee County, which are going to feel the brunt of it,” said Congressman Bishop. “This study is a fundamental step in moving forward towards establishing a clear role for the federal government in addressing the needs of communities affected by this military initiative.”

Congressman Bishop has worked very closely with the Muscogee County School District to help find a solution for the influx of students that will result from the expansion of Fort Benning. Fort Benning expects to receive as many as 9,000 new students after the completion of troop redeployment.

In addition, Congressman Bishop was successful in securing \$5 million in the bill for the construction of a Multi-purpose Parade Field for the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning. This project will provide our soldiers with a place of honor on which to perform their graduation ceremonies and other important events, as part of the larger Infantry Heritage Park.

“This community is blessed to have the ‘Home of the Infantry’ here among us, and I am pleased to have provided funds that will help the base and the surrounding area,” said Congressman Bishop. “Our soldiers are there for us everyday and they greatly deserve this project.

The following is the report language as included in the full committee version of the Defense Appropriation bill passed yesterday:

“The Effects of Rebasing:

The unprecedented combination of Army transformation, the base closure process, and the Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (IGPBS) will shift thousands of military and DoD civilian personnel to new communities nationwide. The Committee is concerned about the effect these rebasing and relocation actions will have on communities, particularly their local school districts and economic infrastructure. Therefore, the Committee directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to assess the combined incremental economic impact of DoD’s base closure, Army transformation, and IGPBS initiatives on those military installations undergoing major realignments by receiving significant numbers of new personnel. This GAO

analysis should include information regarding, but not limited to, the projected number and percentage increase in student enrollment, and the economic impact which may result from increased student enrollment. The GAO is encouraged to work with relevant Federal, state, and local agencies to develop its findings. The Committee intends to work with the GAO to develop the specific parameters and process for this analysis which shall be provided to the Committee not later than February 15, 2007.”